

## 2007 SEQICC President's Report – March 2008

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I will commence this report by acknowledging our members and expressing my appreciation of their support and commitment in 2007, the inaugural year of the South East Queensland Indigenous Chamber of Commerce.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Chamber's Corporate Sponsors – Bridgeworks Training and Employment, South Bank Corporation and Jobfind Centres Australia (formerly Work Directions Australia Pty Ltd) for their invaluable contribution to the continued success of this Chamber.

### *Membership*

The Chamber had fifty five (55) financial members in 2007. There were twenty five (25) Individual Members, twenty four (24) Corporate Members, five (5) Honorary Members and one (1) Sponsor in December 2007. Thirty six (36) of these represented Indigenous businesses.

### *Management Committee*

The inaugural Annual General Meeting and election of Management Committee members took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2007. Below are the elected members of the Chambers first Management Committee:

- President – Charles Jia
- Deputy President – Nola Turner-Jensen
- Secretary – John Anderson
- Treasurer – Bruce Borey
- Committee Member – Neil Willmet
- Committee Member – Kris McCue
- Committee Member – Mary Schnider/Glenn Duncan
- Committee Member – Bill Schonfeld
- Committee Member – Rosemary Connors

The committee met monthly to direct the operations and the strategic direction of the Chamber. My gratitude goes out to all Management Committee Members for their time and involvement. A special acknowledgement to the Secretary, John Anderson for his contribution towards the development of the Chambers draft strategic plan and the review of the constitution and rules.

### *Secretariat*

Following the official launch of the South East Queensland Indigenous Chamber of Commerce at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2006, the appointment of Consultant Christine Kerr took place to provide Secretariat and operational support. Ms Kerr's local chamber experience and knowledge was an important asset at an early stage of the Chambers development.

The Chamber is located at the Learning Network Queensland Centre in South Brisbane. Learning Network Queensland has generously accommodated our Secretariat on a rental basis.

In addition to providing office and meeting space, Learning Network Queensland also provides the Chamber with office equipment and furniture, telecommunications, information technology backup and support.

Christine Kerr provides twenty (20) hours per week of her services to the Chamber from this location. These hours have increased during particularly busy months. We are now seeing a growth in the business of the Chamber and will need to look at our future operational needs based on this growth.

The role of the Secretariat is to manage the day to day operations of the Chamber, including financial management, event management, marketing and administrative duties. Project management is an emerging area of responsibility and will require appropriate resourcing to fulfill its demands.

The Secretariat was bolstered by the employment of Administration Trainee, Justin Power. Justin's position was part funded via the Queensland and Australian Governments Employment Programs. Justin is completing a Certificate IV in Business (Business Development).

He has been assigned the task of completing a project that involves profiling our members, understanding their products/services, how they commenced their business and why they joined the Chamber.

It is envisaged a resource will be developed including case studies and testimonials that will assist the aspiring Indigenous entrepreneurs towards the realization of their business ideas.

Christine Kerr manages Justin's role and provides supervision and support in partnership with Learning Network Queensland administrative staff.

On behalf of the Management Committee and the Chamber's members, I acknowledge and thank both Christine and Justin for their commitment, energy and work ethic.

A lot of the work goes unnoticed though will not escape our appreciation for a job well done. Thank you Christine and Justin!

### *Chamber Events*

The Chamber held four (4) events in 2007.

1. The first "Networking @ Night" event to launch the Chamber's DVD and Website was held at the Pineapple Hotel located at Kangaroo Point in July. Along with Guest Speaker Paul Lucas, Chamber President Charlie Jia addressed over sixty (60) people at this event which was sponsored by:
  - P A Lucas & Co. Chartered Accounts,
  - Work Directions Australia Pty Ltd
  - Pi-Cats Pty Ltd; and
  - AIB Australia Insurance Brokers
2. The second "Networking @ Night" event was held at the Victoria Park Golf Club on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2007. This event attracted over fifty (50) people. Guest Speaker, Waverley Stanley presented his vision for Yalari, his foundation that provides opportunities for remote Indigenous students to attend well renowned private schools. Event Sponsors included:
  - Indigenous Advancement Association Queensland; and
  - Greater Brisbane Area Consultative Committee
3. The Chamber celebrated its first anniversary in November with a function at Rydges Southbank. Approximately seventy (70) people attended the event. Guests from Toowoomba and WA's Kimberley TAFE were entertained by Aboriginal comedian, Sean Choolbura and the John McNicol band. A big thank you to Event Sponsors for a terrific night:
  - South Bank Corporation;

- Bridgeworks Employment and Training;
  - Karma Lifestyles; and
  - Willmetts Group
4. The Chamber also co-hosted a Business Breakfast Forum in October prior to the Federal Elections. The Hon. Ian MacFarlane MP, Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources and Dr Craig Emerson MP, Shadow Minister for the Service Economy, Small Business and Independent Contractors debated "What Lies Ahead for Business and Industry" to a large audience that included local chamber members, industry, small business and government representatives.

Joining the Chamber to host this event was:

- Commerce Queensland
- Southside Chamber of Commerce;
- South West Chamber of Commerce; and
- South East Brisbane Chamber of Commerce.

### *SEQICC Representation*

As President of this Chamber I attended a number of Local Chamber events in 2007 as a guest of the host. These events included:

- South East Brisbane Chamber of Commerce Business Breakfast;
- Gap Chamber of Commerce Business Dinner;
- South West Chamber of Commerce Business Breakfast;
- Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce Business Breakfast; and
- The Combined Gold Coast Chambers of Commerce Business Lunch.

The Chamber representation also included my attendance at the following key functions:

- Centre for Aboriginal Independent Enterprise (CAIE) Business Luncheon;
- Southbank Institute of Technology Indigenous Australian Peoples' Unit Official Opening;
- Lord Mayor Multicultural Business Awards and Gala Dinner;
- Premiers Business Reconciliation Forum and Awards;
- Commerce Queensland Regional President's Forum;
- The Awakening Conference, Gympie;
- Yorta Art Exhibition Launch;
- RAW 2008 Calendar Launch;
- Liquid Learning Indigenous Leadership Forum 2007;
- Greater Brisbane Area Consultative Committee Best Practice Forum;
- Commerce Queensland Workplace Relations Indigenous Program;
- Aboriginal Centre for Performing Arts Symposium; and
- Saltwater Murri's Art Centre Official Opening

## *Website (www.seqicc.com.au)*

During the 2007 financial year the Chamber set up the SEQICC website. The website uses a content management system designed and hosted by Blue Hype.

The website is receiving approximately one hundred and eighty (180) unique visitors per month. These visitors/users then average in total, approximately one thousand, two hundred (1,200) visits per month indicating that users are returning. Whilst this is not a high visitor rate, it is very encouraging given the age and target audience for the website.

## *New Developments 2008*

1. Welcome to a new Corporate Sponsor, Bluecare who joined the Chamber in 2008.  
A member of the "Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment" initiative of the Australian Government, Bluecare is a major provider of residential aged care throughout Queensland and northern New South Wales. Bluecare is very committed towards the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers as a key component of its "Indigenous Care Strategy".
2. Tiga Bayles and 98.9FM is also new Corporate Sponsor. We are looking forward to working with and developing a meaningful business relationship.  
The support of our major sponsors is greatly appreciated. I continue to urge members who know of any organization, business or company interested in supporting and being involved with our Chamber, please contact Christine Kerr on Mobile No. 0419 010 637.
3. The Chamber has won a five (5) month contract with South Bank Corporation to deliver an Employment Assistance program for Indigenous Jobseekers. The Corporation is funded by the Queensland Government's "Skilling Queenslanders for Work" initiative though has engaged the Chambers services in the delivery of the program in partnership with Learning Network Queensland.
4. The Chamber is working in partnership with the Queensland Government Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry and the Department of Premier and Cabinet to host a Small Business Expo in conjunction with the Premiers Business Reconciliation Forum in May 2008.
5. The Chamber was nominated for a 2008 Reconciliation Award for Business sponsored by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.
6. Expression of Interest was distributed this month regarding the SEQICC Business Expo proposed for August / September 2008. I encourage all members and sponsors to get behind this event.
7. Recently (2008) Web developer, Inno8Design was engaged to assist in the development and growth of the website. During March 2008, the menu system was reconstructed and the input of member profiles commenced. During April 2008, it is anticipated that a search facility will enhance the member directory.
8. The Victorian Government's Koori Business Network representatives have consulted with the Chamber's management regarding the establishment of the Chamber. Deputy President Nola Turner and I are invited to speak at the first meeting of the Victorian Indigenous Chamber of Commerce in Melbourne in April 2008.

## *In Closing*

Once again, I would like to thank our members, the Management Committee, the Secretariat and our Sponsors for their support and commitment throughout 2007.

I encourage all members to get to know each other. The more we know about each other the more informed we are when marketing to or referring customers/clients.

2008 is shaping up to be a very busy year for the Chamber. The Management Committee has developed a calendar of events, the SEQICC Strategic and Business Plans are to be finalised, and work will commence to increase the Chamber membership and representation across the six (6) regions. Help us build a strong and active membership.

I trust that it has been a great start to the year. I look forward to continuing the Chamber's success in 2008.

**Charlie Jia**  
**SEQICC President**